

Two Men in a Bar in Maine Talk About Pride by NKNovak

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Summary:

Two men in a bar in Brunswick, Maine talk about Pride Portland!

Two Men in a Bar in Maine Talk About Pride

Author's Note:

Sorry, I couldn't go into more of a description of what pride was like but I have never been to pride in my home city (even though I want to) or in Maine so I wasn't sure what exactly to say.

"Your shirt"

Eddie looked down at his shirt, it was just a plain blue shirt but, pinned on it was a rainbow flag pin he had bought, a few hours ago at the pride festival (he had forgotten he had it on or else he would have taken it off before walking into the bar and restaurant.) Eddie had been nervous going to pride, having never been to anything like it since Derry, where he was from, never had a festival or parade or even made people like him feel welcome in their town (part of the reason why he was staying in his dorm in Brunswick instead of going home for the summer). When he got to Portland, however, all his nerves washed away, everyone and everything was rainbow (or covered in the colors associated with other pride flags), he enjoyed it much more than anticipated and stayed longer than he planned. Unfortunately, he could feel nervous energy bubbling up inside him again as he said, "This? It's a pride pin I got over in Portland during the festival they were having today."

The guy walked off to serve other patrons at the bar where Eddie was sitting drinking his beer and munching on the house-made potato chips, the kitchen was closed at this time, but he was still able to order bar bites. The guy walked back over to Eddie when he determined no one else at the bar needed his help for the time being and asked, but hesitantly, "is anything going on over there next week, I have Thursday off, anything on Thursday?"

Eddie felt more comfortable, now that he knew the bartender asking the questions wasn't homophobic but rather had an invested curiosity. "I'm not sure but I'm sure you can look it up on their website and see what's going on"

The guy nodded.

Eddie paused for the moment before adding, “the bar’s not really busy, we could do it now.” Eddie pulled out his phone, “my name is Eddie by the way”

“Richie” the bartender, Richie, replied.

Eddie and Richie checked the calendar for the rest of June, Richie making a mental note of events that were happening when he had time off and therefore could attend. After that, they continued to talk, and Eddie showed Richie some of the pictures he took at pride. Every now and then Richie would travel along the bar to take care of the other customers’ needs but he always came back to Eddie.

As the night went on, Eddie started to not only talk about Pride Portland! with Richie but also told him the bars he went to (admittedly not too many because Eddie was a college student with a large workload who only recently turned 21.) Richie, as it turns out, was 21 too (he may have lied about his age to his employer to get the job, but no one needs to know that.) Richie took note of everything Eddie said. Richie was technically out to his friends, but not to his family and he’d never had a boyfriend or went to the gay bars around Brunswick. Still, he told Eddie, “maybe I’ll see you there.”

“I hope so” Eddie replied, he paid for his drinks and food and left, leaving Richie with a nice tip, he really enjoyed talking to him and feeling welcomed by him.

“Happy Pride!” Richie called out to Eddie as he left, unintentionally drawing the attention of other patrons.

“Happy pride” Eddie replied, slightly quieter than Richie, hyperaware of the eyes on him.

Eddie didn’t see Richie after that, not at any of the bars, not at any pride events, not even at the bar where Richie worked. Eddie found out from one of Richie’s former co-workers that he quit his part-time job to get in more hours working at the radio station, he was never on air, just a PA for now. He was disappointed but couldn’t say he found himself missing Richie, after all, he didn’t know him very well.

That was until the following year. He went to the Pride Portland! Festival again, this time he was feeling braver and had bought a gay pride shirt to wear. While walking around the festival he ran into Richie.

“Eddie!” he said, a smile lighting up his face.

“You finally made it to an event” Eddie replied.

Richie nodded. “It took me a while to decide whether I should come here or not”

“What made you finally decide to come?”

“Well, a number of reasons, I wanted to, I’ve been putting in so much time and energy at the radio station I think I deserved a day off. . . and I was hoping I’d run into you, and here you are!”

Eddie blushed lightly, he looked down at Richie’s shirt, the shirt was nothing special, but he was wearing a pin, like what Eddie had last year but instead of rainbow flag it was a bi pride flag.

They spent the day together and Eddie drove Richie back to Brunswick since Richie had taken the train down. This time Eddie didn’t leave without getting a last name, Tozier, and a phone number. He was determined to not let it be another year (or more) before he saw Richie again. Richie had the same idea calling Eddie to ask him out on a date after only a few days had passed. Eddie, without hesitation, said yes.